

AND JULIA EVANS  
BY KATIE SYLOR-MILLER



♡

<https://ohshitgit.com>  
love this?

RECIPES FOR GITTING OUT OF A GIT MESS



♡

# What's this?

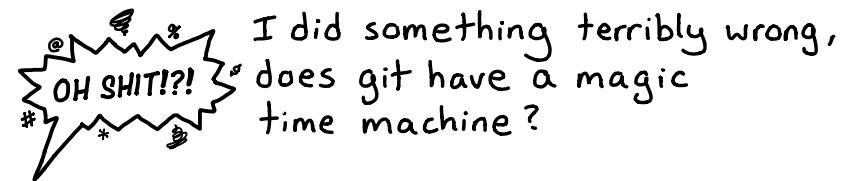
If you find git confusing, don't worry! You're not alone. People who've been using it every day for years still make mistakes and aren't sure how to fix them. A lot of git commands are confusingly named (why do you create new branches with `git checkout`?) and there are 20 million different ways to do everything.



This zine explains some git fundamentals in plain English, and how to fix a lot of common git mistakes.



By Katie Sylor-Miller & Julia Evans  
Website: <https://ohshitgit.com>  
Cover art by Deise Lino



Yes! It's called `git reflog` and it logs every single thing you do with git so that you can always go back.

Suppose you ran these git commands:

```
git checkout my-cool-branch ①
git commit -am "add cool feature" ②
git rebase master ③
```

Here's what `git reflog`'s output would look like. It shows the most recent actions first:

```
245fc8d HEAD@{2} rebase -i (start):③checkout master
b623930 HEAD@{3} commit: ②add cool feature
01d7933 HEAD@{4} checkout: ①moving from master
                           to my-cool-branch
```

If you really regret that rebase and want to go back, here's how:

```
git reset --hard b623930
git reset --hard HEAD@{3}
```

2 ways to refer  
to that commit  
before the  
rebase

\* git fundamentals \*

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• Oh sh!t! mistakes & how to fix them •

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I want to undo something from 5 commits ago!

If you made a mistake but want to keep all of the commits since then, git revert is your friend!

git revert will create a reverse patch for the changes in a commit and add it as a new commit.

① Find the commit SHA for the commit you

git revert SHA

Now all of the changes you made in that commit are undone!

③ Enter a commit message for the revert commit

this is super useful if you push a bad commit to a shared repository and need to undo it!



② Run:

want to undo

# A SHA always refers to the same code

Let's start with some fundamentals! If you understand the basics about how git works, it's WAY easier to fix mistakes. So let's explain what a git commit is!

Every git commit has an id like 3f29abcd233fa, also called a SHA ("Secure Hash Algorithm"). A SHA refers to both:

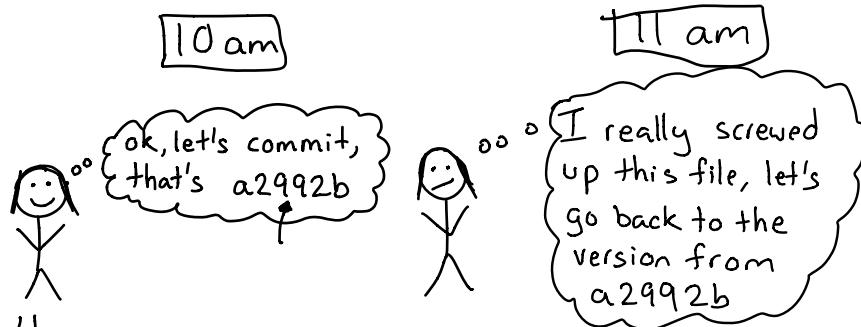
- the changes that were made in that commit see them with 'git show'
- a snapshot of the code after that commit was made

No matter how many weird things you do with git, checking out a SHA will always give you the exact same code. It's like saving your game so that you can go back if you die! You can check out a commit like this:

git checkout 3f29ab

SHAs are long  
but you can  
just use the  
first 6 chars

This makes it way easier to recover from mistakes!



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I want to split my commit into 2 commits!

- ① Stash any uncommitted changes (so they don't get mixed up with the changes from the commit)

git stash

- ② Undo your most recent commit

git reset HEAD^

↑  
safe: this points your branch at the parent commit but doesn't change any files

- ③ Use git add to pick and choose which files you want to commit and make your new commits!

- ④ Get your uncommitted changes back

git stash pop

You can use 'git add -p' if you want to commit some changes to a file but not others!

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A branch is a pointer  
to a commit

fix-fyph → qaqaqa

awesomenefeature → 3bafeaf

master → 2effab

A branch in git is a pointer to a commit SHA

\$ cat .git/refs/heads/master

Here's some proof! In your favourite git repo, run  
this command:

this is just a test file  
with the commit SHA master  
points at!

points at!

Underscoring what a branch is will make it WAY EASIER

to figure out how to get your branch to point at the right  
commit again!  
to fix your branches when they're broken: you just need  
to figure out how to get your branch to point at the right  
commit again!

- \* git reset COMMIT-SHA will point the branch at the remote branch
- \* git pull will point the branch at the same commit as
- \* git commit will point the branch at the new commit

3 main ways to change the commit a branch points to:

16  
branches with many conflicts, if you have 2  
commits, you can just merge!

2

alternatively, if you have 2



git rebase master

④ Rebase on master  
git rebase -i SHA\_YOU\_FOUND  
git merge-base output of git rebase here

③ Squash all the commits in your branch together  
git rebase --interactive

git merge-base master my-branch

② Find the commit where your branch diverged  
from master  
git rebase --abort

① Escape the rebase of doom  
git rebase --abort

This can happen when you're rebasing many  
commits at once.

I started rebasing and  
now I have 100000000  
conflicts to fix!  
OH SHIT!!

# HEAD is the commit you have checked out

In git you always have some commit checked out. HEAD is a pointer to that commit and you'll see HEAD used a lot in this zine. Like a branch, HEAD is just a text file.

Run `cat git/HEAD` to see the current HEAD.

Here are a couple of examples of how to use HEAD:

show the diff for the current commit:

```
git show HEAD
```

UNDO UNDO UNDO UNDO: reset branch to 16 commits ago ↴

```
git reset --hard HEAD~16
```

HEAD~16 means  
16 commits ago

show what's changed since 6 commits ago:

```
git diff HEAD~6
```

squash a bunch of commits together

```
git rebase -i HEAD~8
```

Rebasing a branch against itself 8 commits ago lets you squash commits together!  
(use "fixup")



I committed a file that should be ignored!

Did you accidentally commit a 1.5GB file along with the files you actually wanted to commit? We've all done it.

① Remove the file from Git's index

```
git rm --cached FILENAME
```

This is safe: it won't delete the file

② Amend your last commit

```
git commit --amend
```

③ (optional) Edit your .gitignore so it doesn't happen again



now your coworkers won't be stuck downloading a HUGE git commit

EVERY COMMIT (EXCEPT THE FIRST ONE!) HAS A PARENT COMMIT  
YOU CAN THINK OF YOUR GIT HISTORY AS LOOKING LIKE THIS:

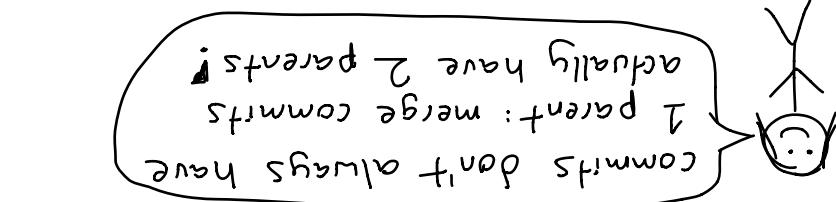
```

graph TD
    C1[commit "2abcede HEAD \"make cats blue\""]
    C2[commit "feffef HEAD \"add cats\""]
    C3[commit "a92eab HEAD \"fix typo\""]
    C4[commit "b29aff HEAD \"initial commit\""]

    C1 -- parent --> C2
    C2 -- parent --> C3
    C3 -- parent --> C4
  
```

HEAD ALWAYS REFERS TO THE CURRENT COMMIT YOU HAVE  
CHECKED OUT, AND HEAD IS ITS PARENT. SO IF YOU WANT TO GO  
LOOK AT THE CODE FROM THE PREVIOUS COMMIT, YOU CAN RUN

git checkout HEAD^



git log shows you all the ancestors of the current commit, all the way back to the initial commit

EVERY COMMIT HAS A PARENT

- git diff --check: check for more conflicts  
git add the fixed files  
Edit the files to fix the conflict  
To resolve the conflict:  
=====
- ```

<<<<< HEAD
    if x == 0:
        return false
    if y == 6:
        return true
    if y == 0:
        code from master
    else:
        code from branch
    >>>>> D34367
    return false
  
```
- git add .  
git commit when you're done → or git rebase --continue if you're rebasing!
- git merge-base --git merge tool! Melod (melodmerge.org) is a great choice!

I have a merge conflict??!  
OH SHIT!!



# mistakes you can't fix

Most mistakes you make with git can be fixed. If you've ever committed your code, you can get it back. That's what the rest of this zine is about!

Here are the dangerous git commands: the ones that throw away uncommitted work.



git reset --hard COMMIT

- ① Throws away uncommitted changes
- ② Points current branch at COMMIT

Very useful, but be careful to commit first if you don't want to lose your changes



git clean

Deletes files that aren't tracked by Git.



git checkout BRANCH FILE<sup>or directory</sup>

Replaces FILE with the version from BRANCH.  
Will overwrite uncommitted changes.



I tried to run a diff but nothing happened?



did you know there are 3 ways to diff ?!

Suppose you've edited 2 files:

\$ git status

On branch master

Changes to be committed:

modified: staged.txt

staged changes  
(added with  
'git add')

Changes not staged for commit:

modified: unstaged.txt

unstaged  
changes

Here are the 3 ways git can show you a diff for these changes:

- git diff: unstaged changes
- git diff --staged: staged changes
- git diff HEAD: staged+unstaged changes

A couple more diff tricks:

- git diff --stat gives you a summary of which files were changed & number of added/deleted lines
- git diff --check checks for merge conflict markers & whitespace errors

I need to change the message  
on my last commit!  
I committed something to  
master that should have been  
on a brand new branch!  
OH SHIT!!

No problem! Just run:

git commit --amend

Then edit the commit message & save!

git commit --amend will replace the old commit  
with a new commit with a new SHA, so you can  
always go back to the old version if you really need  
to.

If you run 'git commit', but change  
your mind, you can always abort by  
deleting the commit message & saving;  
Or quit without saving!



'git branch', and 'git checkout -b', both  
create a new branch. The difference is  
'git checkout -b', also checks out the branch



git checkout my-new-branch

④ Check out the new branch!

git status  
git reset --hard HEAD~  
careful!

③ Remove the unwanted commit from master

git branch my-new-branch

② Create the new branch

git checkout master

① Make sure you have master checked out

I committed something to  
master that should have been  
on a brand new branch!  
OH SHIT!!



I committed but I need to make one small change!

- ① Make your change
- ② Add your files with git add
- ③ Run:

```
git commit --amend --no-edit
```



this usually happens to me when I forget to run tests/ linters before committing!

You can also add a new commit and use git rebase -i to squash them but this is about a million times faster.



I accidentally committed to the wrong branch!

- ① Check out the correct branch

```
git checkout correct-branch
```

cherry-pick makes a new commit with the same changes as \*, but a different parent

- ② Add the commit you wanted to it

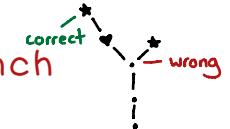
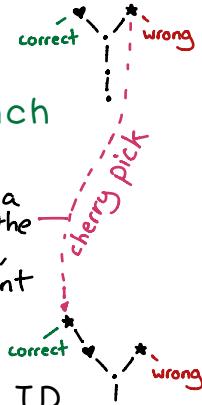
```
git cherry-pick COMMIT_ID
```

use 'git log wrong-branch' to find this

- ③ Delete the commit from the wrong branch

```
git checkout wrong-branch
```

```
git reset --hard HEAD^
```



be careful when running 'git reset --hard'! I always run 'git status' first to make sure there aren't uncommitted changes and 'git stash' to save them if there are